

VAISAKHI ISSUE

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PLEASE NOTE THIS MAGAZINE CONTAINS TEXT FROM GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI. PLEASE HANDLE WITH CARE & RESPECT.

1,000,000 Chaupai Sahib

one million

*"O Lord ! I have forsaken all other doors and have caught hold of only Thy door. O Lord ! Thou has caught hold of my arm;
I, Govind, am Thy serf, kindly take care of me and protect my honour." - Chaupai Sahib*

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THE SEEQ TEAM

Welcome to **SEEQ**, Britain's favourite Sikh magazine for men and women of all ages. Home to Dear Baksho, Sikhs in History, Sikh Woman and What's Going On! Following the phenomenal success of our 1st edition we have strived to give you an even better 2nd edition which we hope you will accept as passionately as you did the 1st.

Inside this edition you'll find articles on Vaisakhi, Seva and respect for the Nishan Sahib as well as the regular Sikh Woman and Dear Baksho columns and much much more. There's also an exclusive from the world renowned artists, the Singh Twins Amrit and Rabindra, whom we would like to thank for taking time out of their busy schedules for us. Check out the article and see how you can get your hands on an original print.

Without contributions from our sponsors and advertisers this magazine wouldn't be possible. Unfortunately we don't have a building fund nor are we funded by grants, the only source of income we have is you. Please support us so we can continue to bring **SEEQ** out regularly and make it even bigger. In return we promise to keep you informed, educated and sometimes make you laugh on and around Sikh issues in today's testing climate. We know there's a credit crunch, but if you dig deep into the backs of your sofas and raid the oversized bottle of pennies you've been collecting, we're sure you'll find something.

The **SEEQ** Team consists entirely of unpaid volunteers from all walks of life that give up their spare time to produce this magazine and all being human, mistakes are bound to be made. We therefore apologise in advance for any errors or omissions. As always we need feedback to see what you think and what you'd like to see, so get in touch.

Finally, thank you to all of you guys and girls out there for reading **SEEQ** and making it a success. Keep talking about **SEEQ** and once you've read it pass it on.

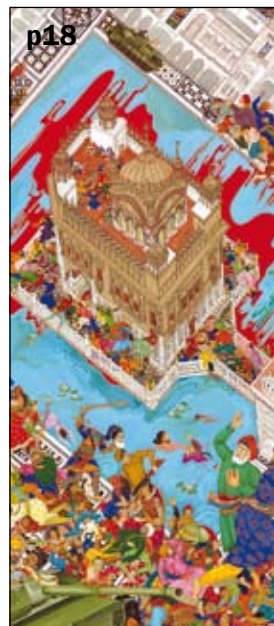
aeee panthhee sagal jamaathee man jeethai jag jeeth ||

See the brotherhood of all mankind as the highest order of Yogis; conquer your own mind, and conquer the world. (SGGSJ Ang 6)

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Harmandir Sahib

First conceived by Guru Amar Das Ji, but its actual construction was begun under the supervision of Guru Ram Das Ji, his successor.

Over the years the city has come to be known by the name of the Holy pool in which the Harmandir Sahib stands.

Located in the centre of the "Amritsar" (the pool of nectar) the Harmandir (sanctum sanctorum) symbolizes the synthesis of nirgun and sargun (the spiritual and temporal realms of human existence) for the Sikhs.



Gurdwara Pipli Sahib

Sangat from Kabul started a pilgrimage to visit Amritsar and have darshan of newly appointed Guru Arjan Dev Ji. On the last day of their journey they were determined to reach the holy presence of the new Guru but could not make it and had to camp a few miles away from Sri Harmandir Sahib.

The Sangat included both old and young. Tired and hungry, they now yearned for a blessed vision of the Holy Guru next morning.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji asked Mata Ganga, his wife, to prepare plenty of food with her own hands.

Guru Arjan Dev Ji along with Mata Ganga then carried the food and water on their heads barefooted to the camp site. They served the food and water themselves to the tired and hungry sangat.



Akal Takhat

Meaning the Throne of the Immortal and is the highest political institution of the Sikhs. "Akal" means "The Timeless One" - another term for God. "Takhat" means "throne" in Persian.

The Akal Takhat is an impressive building that sits directly in front of the causeway leading to the Golden Temple in Amritsar.

The Akal Takhat was founded by Guru Hargobind Ji on June 15, 1606 and was established as the place from which the spiritual and temporal concerns of the Sikh community could be acted upon.



Gurdwara Baba Deep Singh Ji Shaheed

After being beheaded Baba Ji reached Sri Amritsar and offered his head at Sri Harmandir Sahib.

The Gurdwara is located on the Parkarma, at Shaheed Bunge

City of Gold

Amritsar, Punjab



Gurdwara Chheharta Sahib

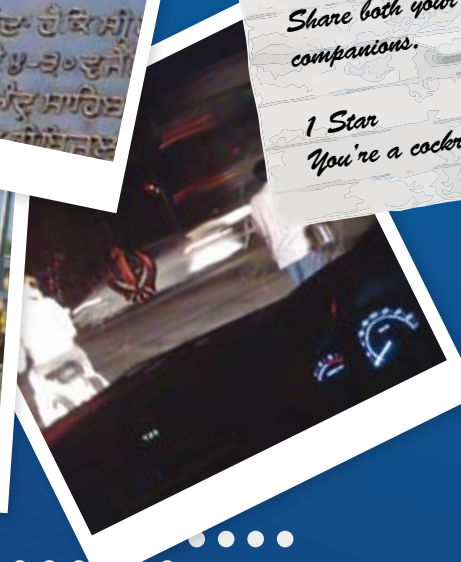
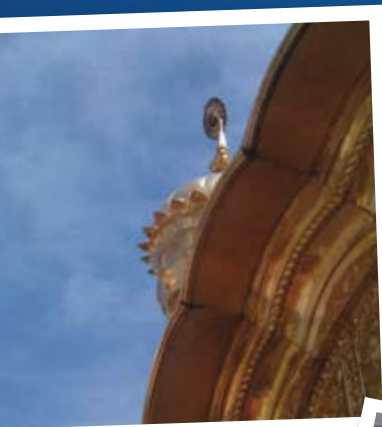
Named after a well that Guru Arjan Dev Ji (1563-1606) had made.

The well was so wide, and the water supply so abundant, that six Persian wheels installed around the interior of its circumference could operate simultaneously. Hence its name Chheharta, having six (chhe) Persian wheels (hart or harta).



Gurdwara Sangrana Sahib

Situated on the Taran Taaran Road in Amritsar District. This is where Guru Har Gobind Ji won his first battle.



Are you planning a yatra to India to visit some of the historical Gurdwara's? Here's some helpful information for your journey planning:

India Hotel Guide


5 Star
Excellent rooms, service and food, but very pricey in every way. There may well be cockroaches, but you'll never see them as they're happily residing behind the lush marble interior décor and fragrant fresh flowers.

4 Star
Superior, if a little dusty in lesser used rooms - might see the odd cockroach using the Ayurvedic spa facilities.

3 Star
Hospitable service, free Wi-Fi and central locations compensate for the 80/20 human/cockroach guest ratio.

2 Star
Share both your bed and your food with your cockroach companions.

1 Star
You're a cockroach.




Gurdwara Baba Atal Sahib

Situated to the south of the Golden Temple, the nine-storey octagonal tower, standing 40 metres high, is the tallest building in Amritsar.

Originally a samadhi, or cenotaph, enshrining the remains of Baba Atal Rai, a son of Guru Hargobind Ji, the sixth Guru of the Sikhs, it was transformed, with the passage of time, into a Gurdwara.



Gurdwara Ramsar Sahib

The Gurdwara is situated alongside the smallest of the five sarovars called Ramsar.

This is the location where in 1603, Guru Arjun Dev Ji, the fifth Sikh Guru spent over a year in semi-seclusion along with his scribe, Bhai Gurdas to compile the original holy Adi Granth.



Gurdwara Kaulsar Sahib

Consists of a Sarovar (pool) known as Kaulsar Sahib or Kaulsar Sarovar.

Named after a holy lady who was raised as a Muslim called Bibi Kaulan.

She was a highly spiritual woman who was above religious divides and took refuge with the sixth master Guru Hargobind Ji at Amritsar (1606-1645).



India

Excerpts from the book 'Crisis of Leadership' by Maj. General M. Khan of Pakistan about the bravery of the Sikh soldiers during the Indo-Pak war.

"The main reason for our defeat was the sight facing us of Sikhs fighting. We were helpless to do anything in front of them. Sikhs are very brave and they have a great craving for martyrdom. They fight so fiercely that they are capable of defeating an army many times bigger than theirs.

....On 3rd December 1971, we fiercely and vigorously attacked the Indian army with our infantry brigade near Hussainiwala border. This brigade included the Pakistan army's Fighter Punjabi regiment together with the Baloch regiment. Within minutes we pushed the Indian army quite far back. Their defence posts fell under our control. The Indian army was retreating back very fast and the Pakistani army was going forward with a great speed.

All these soldiers were Sikhs. There was even a dreadful hand-to-hand battle.

The sky filled with roars of 'Yaa Ali' and 'Sat-Sri-Akal'. Even in this hand-to-hand fighting the Sikhs fought so bravely



BRAVERY AND THE SIKH SPIRIT

Our army reached near the Kausre-Hind post. There was a small segment of the Indian army appointed to defend that post and their soldiers belonged to the Sikh regiment.



A few number of the Sikh regiment stopped our way forward like an iron wall. They loudly greeted us with the ovation of 'Bole-so-Nihal' and attacked us like blood thirsty hungry lions and hawks.

that all our desires, aspirations and dreams were shattered.

....In this war Lt. Col Gulab Hussain of Baloch Regiment got killed. With him Major Mohammed Zaeef and Captain Arif Alim also died. It was difficult to count the number of soldiers who got killed. We were astonished to see the courage of those handful of Sikh soldiers. When we seized the possession of the three-storey defence post of concrete, the Sikh soldiers went onto the roof and kept on persistently opposing us.

The whole night they kept on showering fires on us and continued shouting the loud ovation of 'Sat-Sri-Akal'. These Sikh soldiers kept on the encounter till the next day. The next day the Pakistani tanks surrounded this post and bombed it with guns. Those handful of Sikhs got martyred in this encounter while resisting us, but other Sikh soldiers then destroyed our tanks with the help of their artillery.

Fighting with great bravery they kept on marching forward and thus our army lost its foothold.

....Alas, a handful of Sikhs converted our great victory into a big defeat and shattered our confidence and courage.

....The same thing happened with us in Dhaka (Bangladesh). In the battle of Jaissur, the Singh's opposed the Pakistani army so fiercely that our backbone and our foothold were lost. This became the main and important reason of our defeat and the Sikhs' fancy for martyrdom and mockery with death for the sake of safety and honour of the country, became the sole cause of their victory.

The bravery and spirit of sacrifice of Sikhs were respected and honoured by one and all."

One prominent feature at virtually every event celebrating Vaisakhi, indeed most Sikh events, is the Nishan Sahib. The Nishan Sahib can be seen from miles around due to its symbolic bright color and distinctive features. There are even what I like to call mini-Nishan Sahibs hung on the mirrors of cars, as it gives us a sense of belonging, pride and identity.

The colour orange signifies honour and sacrifice

You name it...cars, people, dhols are covered top to bottom in orange cloth. The very same people can be seen dancing in the street; let's not dwell on the police trying to escort everyone away. Unfortunately you will also see Nishan Sahibs on the floor, people standing in pubs, a glassy in one hand and waving a Nishan Sahib in the other. This Vaisakhi you may be unfortunate enough to see girls, and strangely some guys, with orange highlights in their hair, held in place by orange bandannas, possibly wearing a Khanda hoody but with a spliff behind their ears!

One must contemplate that when Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji introduced the Nishan Sahib into the Sikh panth, is this what he intended us to do with it? Guru Gobind Singh Ji would hand the Nishan Sahib to Bhai Man Singh, a revered sikh, who would hold aloft the Nishan Sahib when going into battle. Did it really merit him entrusting the Nishan Sahib to a Sikh who he faithfully believed would never dishonour it by allowing it to drop to the floor, if he knew how we would happily drop the Nishan Sahib on the floor in today's age?



Every Vaisakhi, most Gurdwaras around the world will change their Nishan Sahib. The Nishan Sahib pole is venerably cleaned with milk, thus showing the amount of respect that Sikhs hold for the Nishan Sahib. Members of the sangat are often seen touching the feet of Nishan Sahib bearers at Nagar Kirtans and bowing to a Nishan Sahib outside the Gurdwara, thus showing their allegiance to the faith, a belief in justice, equality and liberty.

Why is the colour saffron (orange) so dear to the Sikhs? The colour signifies honour and sacrifice. Sikhs would carry the Nishan Sahib into battle and wave it in times of victory as a salutation to Waheguru and his Army (the Khalsa), now we wave it and leave it on the floor as we leave!

This Vaisakhi we hope to see the sons and daughters of the Guru waving the Nishan Sahib with pride but without a can of Stella, or a cigarette, or dancing on the streets of Broadway or Soho Road and without a stream of cars covered in orange blasting the latest Miss Pooja track. While celebrating Vaisakhi, let's not disrespect or confuse the two different aspects of religion and culture.

Respect where respect is due...

Flying High

DID YOU KNOW?

The first ever Nishan Sahib was hoisted at Akal Takhat Sahib in the year 1609 by our 6th Guru, Guru Hargobind Sahib Ji.

The Highest Nishan Sahibs in the world are standing on the 17,000 feet high Sapt-Sring mountain peaks around Hem-kunt Sahib, India.



The concept of interest and how it relates to Sikhi

There's one often-cited example of the power of compound interest. If Christopher Columbus had placed a single penny in a 6 percent interest-bearing account and instructed someone to remove the interest at the end of every year, the value of the interest earned by 2008 would be around 31 cents. However, if he had placed the same penny into the same interest-bearing account but left the earned interest to compound - **earning interest upon the interest** - the resulting balance for 513 years would be **\$95,919,936,112. That's nearly \$96 billion!**

**Invested
Growth?**



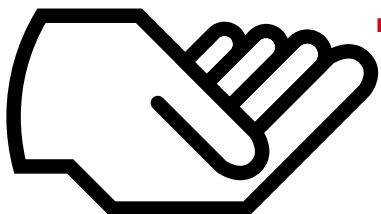
There are over 500 gurdwaras

So, how does this economic concept relate to Sikhi? Well, it's fairly simple. In the same way that we place interest in an account and leave it to mature over the long term, Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji has planted the seed of our Sikhi and over time (despite our hardships) we've continued to flourish, grow and maintain our relationship with our beloved Guru Ji's - all with Maharaj's kirpa.

For example...

When Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji was a teen, his father gave him 20 rupees and sent him on a trading mission to buy some fine goods which could later be resold for a profit. However, on his way to buy the merchandise, he met a group of sadhus/saints living in a jungle. Guru Nanak Dev Ji couldn't overlook the poor condition of the poverty-stricken holy men and decided that the most profitable transaction he could make with his father's money would be to feed and clothe them. When he returned home empty handed, his father punished him for wasting the money.

Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji however, insisted that the true profit is to be had in selfless service, and from this he established the principal of Guru ka langar.



So, moving forward....

Comparing this with today's Sikhi; this 20 rupees which Sri Guru Nanak Dev Ji 'invested' towards langar di sewa, has continued to grow and today, there's not a single Gurdwara in the world where you can go and not be blessed with our Guru Ji's langar. By today's standards, this original 20 rupee investment is now worth millions as our Gurdwaras have flourished throughout the world - there are over 500 Gurdwaras in the United Kingdom alone!

Adapting this economic growth formula to a sociological concept, it's clear to see how it aligns with the famous Sikhi proverb stated in Bhai Gurdas Ji's Vaars...

"Walking one step towards the Guru's feet, the True Guru walks millions of steps to welcome you. If, with devotion and reverence, one places only one coin in front of the Guru, the Guru blesses him with all treasures.

**The True Guru is the treasure of all mercy, his glory is infinite.
Always, always always,
I bow, I bow, I bow,
I bow to the True Guru..."**



Instead of reflecting on failed promises and yesterdays mistakes, let us take the vow to live our Guru Ji's teachings and invest our time to gain the interest on our sewa and turn our lives in a new direction. As without a doubt, the blessings of our labour will extend beyond ourselves and follow through for generations upon end.

Harinder Singh Hansra
Inspired by my late grandmother
Jagir Kaur Hansra

Following a recent scandal in the medical profession, a doctor was recently struck off the medical register for removing and storing organs post mortem, from bodies of deceased children.

A number of hospitals have since stated that in order to help medical research, organs are sometimes removed from dead bodies after post mortems, without permission. We hear of these stories through the media and immediately frown upon the medical profession, but do we ask ourselves the reasons for their actions?

God gives us life and it is God who takes life away. After death, the spirit leaves the body to continue in the circle of life, while the body remains soulless. We perform a funeral to mark the end of the person's life, however the body is of no use or value to the departed soul or the families. The question remains therefore, is there any reason for Sikhs to prevent doctors from carrying out post mortems or even removing any organs from the deceased if they can help others or help medical research?

Save a life. Give Blood



DONATE AN ORGAN

waras in the United Kingdom alone!

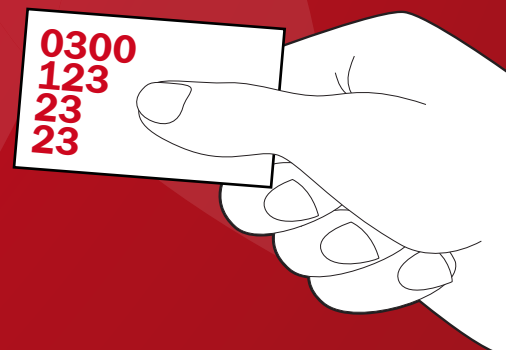
The authorities are becoming increasingly concerned about the number of people (or lack of) who are volunteering as organ donors. Volunteering as an organ donor means that we give permission for our organs to be used after death, for medical purposes. The number of donors from South Asian communities, including the Sikh community is much lower than the number of donors from other communities. Many believe that there is a general feeling among the Sikh community against the practice of carrying out post mortems. However, can we believe this to be true, when we do not speak openly about the subject?

Carrying a donor card can be seen as Seva – you will be helping others to live a longer life, helping to further medical research into the health of our community, long after we have passed on.

Communication is the key, talk to your family, talk to your doctor, consider carrying a donor card and explain your reasons for doing so. It is a sensitive topic, but your donor card could be the key to another person's survival.

Please contact the NHS Organ Donor Register on 0300 123 23 23 for more information or see www.uktransplant.org.uk.

Bhupinder Singh



Vaisakhi dhiya vidhaya
Happy Vaisakhi

Women and children have the right to live free from domestic violence abuse and fear

Call: 0800 0732 606 for Helpline and Refuge

DID YOU KNOW?

Anandpur Sahib (Punjab), March 11 2009- As many as 18,207 people from various states across India donated blood in a single day creating a new world record.



In the wake of the millennium it's easy to forget who we are and where we come from. The hustle and bustle of modern day living, often too easily allows us to forget things that are important to us. Have we forgotten the importance of our culture, our history and our role models? Have we slipped into a nation of modern day individual's just about finding time to work and look after the family?

Today we should encourage growth and success amongst the women in our society.

We often hear how men are superior to women, but in fact there are so many powerful women that have made their mark in history. In our Sikh religion we have such great role models. Many are women that have fought for our religion or have given so much to our faith that they will always be remembered.

What do you think about when I say motivated, inspirational, selfless, admirable and independent? You may be reading this and still thinking about what they represent, but to me it's easy, they represent many women from hundreds of years ago that questioned the typical ideals of that period of time.

There are three women I can say that stand out in my mind. The first being Bibi Nanaki Ji, the second being Mai Bhago and last, but no means least Mata Khivi. To some people these names may mean very little, but to those who do know of these courageous women, you will share my appreciation that they even existed and challenged a world dominated by men.

Bibi Nanaki was the elder sister of Guru Nanak Dev Ji. She was born in 1464 in Chahal. Guru Nanak Dev Ji was born 5 years later, but to his elder sister he wasn't just a younger brother. She was the first person to recognise he had a special quality, that he wasn't just an ordinary man. She was Guru Nanak Dev Ji's first Sikh, his first follower. Bibi Nanaki always knew her brother was nothing less than a Guru

Mai Bhago was another believer and another saint in the eyes of a Sikh. In 1704 she led soldiers and fought against Mughals on the battlefield. Mai Bhago represented Sikhism like no other woman. She was brave enough to challenge the Mughals after they surrounded Anandpur and demanded every Sikh man and woman declare themselves no longer a Sikh of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and their lives will be spared. If they refused to do this they were forced to look death in the face. 40 Sikhs succumbed to the Mughals and told Guru Gobind Singh Ji they were no longer Sikhs and signed a letter confirming this and left for their villages. When Mai Bhago heard of this she bore arms herself and declared she would go to the Gurus aid if the men weren't man enough to act as true Sikhs.

Sikh-Queens

Guru Nanak Dev Ji's parent's initially found it hard to accept his purpose in life and were forced to send him to live with his elder sister and her husband in Sultanpur. It was here that Bibi Nanaki Ji started to bow to Guru Nanak Dev Ji out of respect. He tried to stop her and told her she should not bow down to him as she was older, and she replied

"That is true if you were an ordinary man, but you are more to me, I see God in you".

Bibi Nanaki never lost faith in Guru Nanak Dev Ji and believed he would never leave this world until his mission was completed. Bibi Nanaki should be a great inspiration to all women on this Earth and a reminder that if you have faith and you believe, good things will happen.

Upon seeing her bravery and feeling ashamed, the 40 Sikhs had a change of heart and followed Mai Bhago into battle.

The 40 Sikhs caught up with the Mughals that had been in pursuit of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and a fierce battle ensued. After the battle all but one of the 40 Sikhs had died and Mahan Singh, the last of the 40 Sikhs, was mortally wounded. He lived long enough to ask for Guru Ji's forgiveness and asked him to tear up the letter. Guru Gobind Singh Ji tore up the letter and blessed the 40 Sikhs as the 40 liberated ones.



It was then that Guru Gobind Singh Ji recognised something special in Mai Bhago and took her on as one of his bodyguards. Mai Bhago managed to stand out in a man's world and protected someone so special that all Sikhs hold close to their hearts. The fact that she was a woman protecting a man and fighting for our faith shows in itself how special she was.

Another woman that brought enlightenment to our culture was **Mata Khivi**.

She was married to Bhai Lehna for 20 years before he became our 2nd Guru. She enjoyed a life of luxury and was given a great deal of respect. Mata Khivi chose to represent equality for women in a period that again treated women like second class citizens.

Her husband Bhai Lehna was a trusted disciple of Guru Nanak Dev Ji and was eventually bestowed with Guruship. Mata Khivi learnt a lot from her husband and embraced the new faith that Guru Nanak Dev Ji and Bhai Lehna were propagating. She had a lot to put up with and also took a bit of taunting from not only men of that time, but the women also. Bhai Lehna now became Guru Angad Dev Ji and from this point onwards the Guru had so many visitors coming and going Mata Khivi now found a new purpose in life.

In our Sikh teachings it states 'One must earn one's living through one's own labour'. Mata Khivi took this seriously and took it upon herself to reflect this teaching in providing the Langar for visitors. Her hospitality had become the first cultural identity of the Sikhs and to this day still lives on. Mata Khivi is described as good natured, efficient and all round perfect. Her persona lives on today and she is the only one of the Guru's wives that is mentioned in the Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

She never turned her back on anyone and touched everyone that came in contact with her. Mata Khivi represents an essential trait of Sikh culture and this should be celebrated amongst us all.

Guru Granth Sahib Ji describes her as a 'good person', 'affectionate mother' and as 'one who provides shelter and protection to others'.

These women are examples of how strong and giving women are and that we are not inferior to anyone.

The modern woman is just as powerful, strong and courageous so let us celebrate this! If women can single-handedly change times when only a man's world existed this is a testament to the modern day Sikh woman that times can be changed and it is no longer a man's world.

As a modern day woman we should be challenging the stereotypical ideologies of the man's world. It is surprising how much of an influence women can have in today's society. Don't sit back and follow suit, be a leader because every woman has special qualities that today's community needs and our society is waiting for us to challenge this.

All three women are greatly respected in our religion and are an example to women of today that we are more powerful than we think; we are inspirational to so many people and are courageous in our efforts. Through Bibi Nanaki's, Mai Bhago's and Mata Khivi's motivation and success stories we will be able to find it in ourselves to recognise that we are in fact greatly respected and our skills are essential in the development of our lives, our country and our religion.

If there is anything I have learnt from these women it is to believe, to act on my beliefs and achieve them. If you want to look for guidance on how to be a good modern day role model all you need to do is look back into our history and you will see how the strength of women represented so well in the early days of our religion. Imagine how hard it was hundreds of years ago for a woman to even stand for anything, so if they can do it, any of us women can.

& Swords

Follow your heart and make a difference where it counts....ladies, stand up and shine!

Why not do something inspirational today?

Jennifer Jhamat

Florence Nightingale carried out pioneering work during the Crimean War (1853-1856) to improve the care of sick and wounded soldiers. She was determined to achieve the best for the patients in very difficult conditions. Her work proved an inspiration to the founder of the Red Cross movement, Henry Dunant. Surely as Sikhs we should find even greater inspiration from a humanitarian who not only looked after his own but the enemy too, much to the chagrin of some of his fellow Sikhs.

Bhai Kanhaiya was born in 1648 in the Sodhara District, now in Pakistan. His father was a wealthy trader, but he himself left home when still very young and roamed about with saddhus and ascetics in search of spiritual peace. His quest ended as he met Guru Tegh Bahadur and got the opportunity to serve him. Bhai Kanhaiya established a Dharamsal at Kavha village, Pakistan. His special mission was selfless service of humanity with no distinction of nationality, caste or creed as taught by Guru Nanak Dev Ji

In 1704-5, he was on a visit to Anandpur when the city was invaded by a combination of hill troops and the imperial Mughal army.

He took upon the task of quenching the thirst of the wounded soldiers in the battle. Carrying a mashak (a sort of pouch made of goat's skin that was used to carry water from one place to another) he would serve water to anyone who was thirsty. He did this sewa with love and affection without any discrimination between the friend or foe.

His act of compassion stirred up severe condemnation amongst his fellow Sikhs, who went ahead and complained to Guru Gobind Singh Ji, pointing out that Bhai Kanhaiya Ji was serving water to the wounded soldier's from the enemy camp. They were particularly annoyed as the Mughals had encircled the city and stopped all food supplies, and here was Bhai Kanhaiya sharing with them what little water they had. Many a time they had tried to stop him, but he would not pay any heed to the protestations.

Bhai Kanhaiya ji submitted 'with thy grace my Lord my eyes are so enlightened that I see nothing else but your divine spirit pervading everywhere and in all, since I served none else but only thyself my Lord?'

Bhai Sahib's benevolent action had upset some Sikhs who went directly and complained Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji. Guruji, having summoned Bhai Kanhaiya, said "These brave Sikhs are saying that you go and feed water to the enemy and they recover to fight them again – Is this true?"

Bhai Kanhaiyaji submitted 'with thy grace my Lord my eyes are so enlightened that I see nothing else but your divine spirit pervading everywhere and in all, since I served none else but only thyself my Lord?'

The Guru was very pleased with the reply. Bhai Kanhaiya Ji had understood the deep message of Gurbani correctly. Guru ji smiled and blessed Bhai Kanhaiya. Guru Ji said, "Bhai Kanhaiya Ji, you have understood the true message of Gurbani".

Guru Ji also gave Bhai Kanhaiya Ji medicine and said "From now on, You should also put this balm on the wounds of all who need it"

Then turning to the sangat Guru Ji said, "Saadh sangat ji, Bhai Kanhaiya is a God-fearing saintly soul. His impartial and non-biased behaviour towards others has led him to achieve Sehaj-avastha. Let him carry on with his mission. Many more will follow in his footsteps in the years to come and keep the tradition of Nishkam Seva alive."

Blind Faith

Bhai Kanhaiya (1648 - 1718)

BIG TROUBLE

IN LITTLE INDIA

Karambir Singh Kang, the hotel's general manager, lost his wife and two sons in the raid but his sense of duty made him stay at his post to help guests to safety. He lost his family after they barricaded themselves inside an apartment on the sixth floor. They were asphyxiated by smoke while hiding in the bathroom. Mr Kang, who was appointed general manager a year previously, called his mother in Mohali, Kandala, to tell her he was separated from his family and unable to help them and her reply gave him the courage to continue. "Go save the others," she said.

His mother Kanwaljeet Kaur said: "He told me that terrorists have entered the hotel and his family is stuck on the sixth floor and that he can't save them. I just said: 'You are a brave boy, go save the others'."

His coolness amid gunfire and exploding grenades helped many guests to escape.

Many hours later as the final gunman in the hotel was killed by commandos Mr Kang was finally persuaded to go home to his relatives by the hotel owner, industrialist Ratan Tata.

The bodies of his wife Niti, 40, and their sons Uday, 14, and Samar, 5, were recovered after three days from the locked toilet in their hotel room. Mr Kang's father, Major General (Retd) Jagtar Singh Kang, told relatives that Niti and her sons had been trapped inside their room after fire engulfed several floors of the hotel.

Ardaas was held for Mr Kang's family at a gurdwara near their home in Mohali. Relatives posted a message to well-wishers: "Now time has come to stand united and forget all differences, may it be political, ideological or religious to give a befitting reply to terrorism and those who perpetrate it." Mr Kang asked for support and prayers, saying that apportioning blame would not make up for the relatives' irreparable loss. With acknowledgements to Langarhall, Times of India, Express India and The Independent.

The terrorist attack on the Taj Mahal Hotel in Mumbai, created victims and heroes and for one man an unbearable combination of both.



Sikh youths offer food to Mumbai security forces

News Source: timesofindia.indiatimes.com

During the chaotic aftermath of the terror strikes many ordinary Mumbaikars came out on the streets to offer whatever help they could. One such group of young Sikhs worked relentlessly during last few days to offer food and water to security forces at Taj and Oberoi hotels.

About 20 to 25 young Sikh men, volunteering for Gurudwara Shri Dashmesh Darbar in Sion, saw the chilling pictures of the carnage on television and offered to help. With the help of women from the community, they set up a temporary langar at several gurudwaras in the suburbs and cooked food day and night.

"Once Shri Guru Nanak Sahab had little money left in his pocket, but he used that money to serve food to the needy. We all

draw inspiration from that incident. A Sikh's first duty is to serve the needy," said Ajit Singh, a volunteer who was serving food at Taj.

On Thursday and Friday, the volunteers supplied 500 packets of food to forces along with water. For lunch and dinner, 1000 packets of puri bhaji was prepared and served to forces at Oberoi and Taj.



South Birmingham
College



Happy Vaisakhi

from South Birmingham College

BRING
IT ON!

South Birmingham College is proud to be supporting the Vaisakhi Festival. Mike Hopkins, Principal of South Birmingham College re-enforced this by saying "We are genuinely committed to equality as anyone who has been to the College will see for themselves. We have staff and students from most religions and cultural backgrounds and I am proud that regardless of their religion staff and students volunteer to help with supporting this Vaisakhi Festival every year."

South Birmingham College was praised for "outstanding promotion of inclusiveness and equality of opportunity" in its last Ofsted Inspection and has also been presented with the Diversity Award from PATH West Midlands for making a significant contribution to promote race equality in the workplace.

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- On Monday 16th of March 2009 there was a women's congregation at Gurdwara Sikh Sangat, Harley Grove in Bow (East London).
- One woman noticed someone enter the Gurdwara Sahib.
- Then a fire broke out in the Sachkhand room.
- Over 10 fire engines and 50 firefighters battled for over 6 hours to bring the fire under control.
- The fire destroyed over 75% of the Gurdwara Sahib complex; the Gurdwara's roof completely caved in.
- 11 blessed Saroops of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji were burnt due to the fire.
- Sevadars from across the country worked day and night on the daunting Seva of preparing Satguru Ji's saroops for the Sanskaar (cremation) ceremony.
- It brought tears to the eyes of all to see how the Angs (limbs) of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji were burnt and blackened because of the fire, and dripping wet and ice cold due to the water damage.
- Under the guidance of Akaal Takhat Sahib an Akhand Paath was carried out and the Sanskaar Seva took place at Guru Gobind Singh Khalsa College Chigwell.
- Sangat from across the country came to pay their respects and witness Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji's Sanskaar.
- Sadly out of 750,000 Sikhs that live across the UK, only 1,000 – 2,000 people gathered for the Sanskaar.

Take a moment Saadh Sangat Ji, think... our beloved Satguru Ji's Saroops were burnt in fire and doused in water – do we feel no pain?

Who is Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji?

It is no use to simply chant the words 'Pargat Guraa Kee Deh' – 'The Divine Embodiment of all Ten Guru Sahibs'. It is time to bring those words into action in our Gurdwaras.



- 300 years ago Guru Gobind Singh Ji commanded all Sikhs to accept Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the living embodiment of all ten Guru Sahibaans.
- 31 years ago 13 Singhs laid their lives defending the sanctity of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.
- 25 years ago Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji endured the bullets of the Indian Army.

Yet we forget their sacrifices every moment of every day!

An attack on Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is an attack on the whole Panth; an attack on the Guru Ji's house is an attack on our house. Just as Sri Guru Arjan Dev Ji sacrificed his physical form by burning in boiling cauldrons whilst red hot sand ran down his divine body; just as Guru Tegh Bahadur Sahib Ji sacrificed himself to protect righteousness, in the same way Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji Maharaj has sacrificed themselves 11 times in order to awaken the Sikh Panth from its slumber.

Are we going to ignore the fact that ALL Ten Guru Sahibs have sacrificed themselves through smoldering fire and icy cold water 11 times in order to awaken us?

What to do now?

We must remove corruption, lies and the focus on materialism from our Gurdwaras and we must stop Beadbi (disrespect) of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji wherever it's taking place. Remember the words of Guru Har Rai Sahib Ji,

**"Jin Bhae Adab Naa Baanee Dharaa
| Jaanoh(u) So Sikh Nahee(n)
Hamaaraa |**

**He who has no fear or respect of
Gurbani is not my Sikh."**

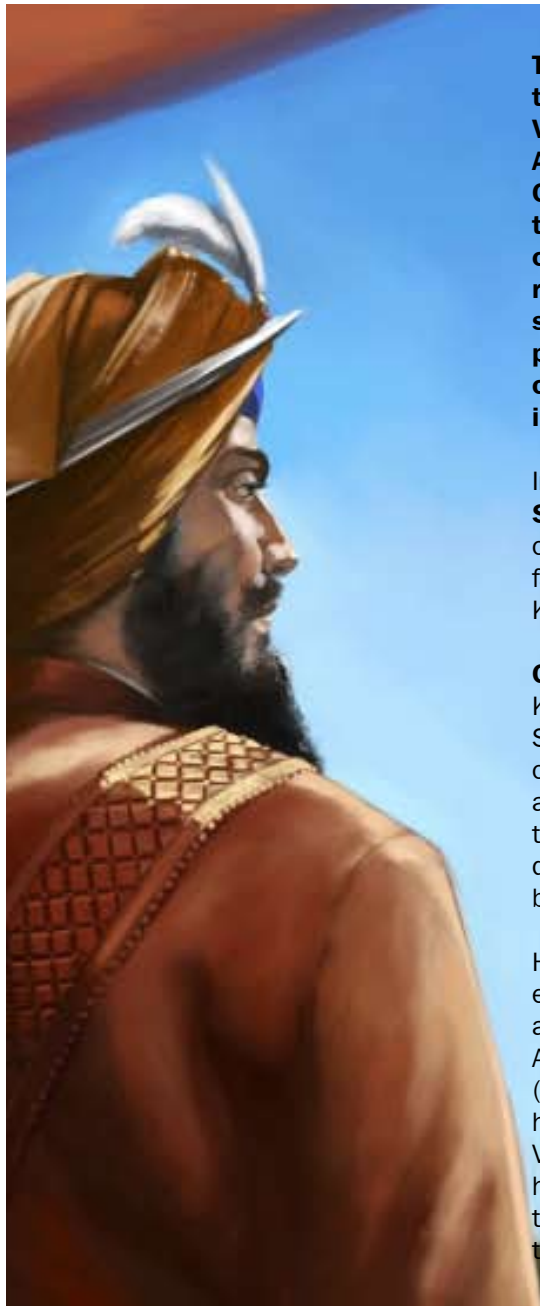
The fact that the police are dealing with the fire as a simple case of criminal damage to property shows how we have failed to make the world aware that Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is not a book, rather Sri Guru Granth Sahib is our beloved living Guru. We must keep pressure on the Police to resolve this issue as quickly as possible.

We must take the pain of this episode into our hearts and join together as brothers and sisters in the Khalsa. We must not rest till the perpetrators of this heinous crime are brought to justice!

If anyone has any information regarding the fire please contact Sevadars on 07984275635 or contact Crime-Stopppers on 0800 555 111

LONDON BURNING The Bow Gurdwara Tragedy

For more information visit
www.neverforgetbow09.co.uk
At this difficult time please pray for
the Panth on www.chaupaisahib.org



The word “Vaisakhi” is derived from the name of the month “Vaisakh”. Vaisakh extends over from 13th April till 14th May in the Indian Calendar. Prior to standardisation of the worldwide calendar, the 1st day of the Vaisakh month (13th April), is regarded as “Vaisakhi”, marks the start of the New Year and accounting period. New Year’s celebrations coincided with the harvest season in the Punjab.

In 1699 the tenth guru, **Guru Gobind Singh Ji**, chose Vaisakhi as the occasion to transform the Sikhs into a family of saint soldiers, known as the Khalsa Panth.

Guru Gobind Singh Ji founded the Khalsa in front of thousands at Anandpur Sahib. There are numerous accounts of the day. Unfortunately many original accounts of the day were destroyed in the years that followed and this has distorted the historical version that has been relayed to us.

However an eye witness account that exists is that of Abu-ul-Turani, who was a spy of the Mughal Emperor Aurangzeb. Abu-ul-Turani was posted in the Court (Darbar) of Guru Gobind Singh Ji and he was present in Anandpur Sahib on Vaisakhi, his account which is part of his memoirs can be accessed from the archives of Aligarh University. The translation of his account is as follows:

“The day Guru Gobind Singh prepared the nectar at Anandpur Sahib, the congregation was estimated to be around 35,000 to 40,000 Sikhs who had come from far and wide. I had seen the grandeur of the Mughal Darbars but this Darbar had a charm of its own – simply majestic and beyond explanation.

The Guru came on the stage and after drawing his sword demanded a head from the present congregation.

This awesome call from the Guru sent a shiver through the spines of the congregation, but amidst all this a brave person emerged and with his hands clasped presented himself to the Guru. The Guru beheaded him in front of everyone on the stage and again asked for another head. Another person came on the stage and was also beheaded. The Guru called again and, one at a time, three other Sikhs came onto the stage and met the same fate as the previous ones.

The bodies and heads of five of these Sikhs which were lying on the stage were then cleaned with water and the stage was also cleaned and no trace of blood was left. The Guru then surgically stitched each head with a different body and then covered the bodies with white sheets.

FIVE OLIVE

THE vibrant orange colour of the Sikh nation is proudly worn by thousands of revellers during Vaisakhi celebrations. But what is Vaisakhi all about?



He then ordered a stone urn to be brought to the stage and on top of it an iron cauldron (batta) was placed and he added some water to it. The Guru then put his double-edged sword (Khanda) in it and started stirring it while chanting some words (Gurbani). He took some time doing this and one woman from the Guru's household (Mata Ajeet Kaur Jee) came and put something in the cauldron (sugar crystals). The nectar was now ready.

The Guru then removed the white sheet from one body and poured the nectar into the mouth, hair and on the body. Whilst doing this he pronounced "Vaaheguroo Jee Kaa Khalsa Vaaheguroo Jee Kee Fateh."

This person sat up and loudly chanted "Vaaheguroo Jee Kaa Khalsa Vaaheguroo Jee Kee Fateh." The whole congregation was aghast and taken aback by this miracle.

The Guru did the same to the rest of the four Sikhs and they also, like their counterparts, rose up with shouts of "Vaaheguroo Jee Kaa Khalsa Vaaheguroo Jee Kee Fateh."

The Guru then took these five Sikhs into a tent and when they re-emerged they were clad in new clothes. Then the Guru kneeled down and asked them to give him the nectar. Obliging they also gave him the nectar. The Guru named these five Sikhs **Daya Singh, Dharam Singh, Himmat Singh, Mokham Singh & Sahib Singh**, and also changed his own name from Gobind Rai to Gobind Singh.

I (Abu-ul-Turani) was very much impressed and my heart grieved to be under the Guru's guidance and with a lump in my throat, I too approached the Guru and begged him to bless me with the nectar. The Guru smilingly obliged and initiated me and named me Ajmer Singh, thus with the Guru's blessing I attained eternal bliss.

Ask not what your Guru can do for you; ask what you can do for your Guru! What will your Vaisakhi resolution be?

This was the last report I ever sent to Aurangzeb in which I also mentioned emphatically that the Guru is "God" and warned Aurangzeb that this enmity towards the Guru will lead to the downfall and destruction of his empire."

(The above narration has been verified by the great Sikh Scholar and Historian Dr. Ganda Singh).

If we take ourselves back to 1699 the real significance of why Guru Ji revealed the Khalsa can be comprehended.

During the period around 1650, the country around Punjab was in turmoil; the rulers were corrupt; there was no rule of law; the rights of the common people were being trampled on; justice did not prevail. The strong imposed their will and their way without question; the weak suffered constantly and quietly; there was misery everywhere. The weak were slaughtered daily and no one heard their screams; the rich were accountable to no one and their wishes prevailed; higher authority could be easily bought with money and wealth; for the average person, no peace could be guaranteed; people lived like animals; fear gripped many nations.

The minority ruled by imposing terror upon the common people; death was never far away from one's thoughts

It was under these circumstances that **Guru Gobind Singh Ji** rose to the occasion and chose to create the Khalsa – the pure saint soldier.

The Guru was looking for special people within the community who would take on the challenge and rise above the weakness of the common people; to be strong and fearless; to be prepared to face these challenges without reservation and without resorting to injustice; to be fair and even handed at all times; to be prepared to die for the truth. The Guru says the following about the Khalsa:

"The Khalsa is my true image. I dwell in the Khalsa".

Vaisakhi should be considered a day of reflection for all of us. This is the time to listen carefully to that loud call of the Guru in 1699. What is that call saying? "I want the head of one dedicated Sikh!" Why not make it your head this year and realign your life to that of a saint soldier in the army of **Guru Gobind Singh Ji**.

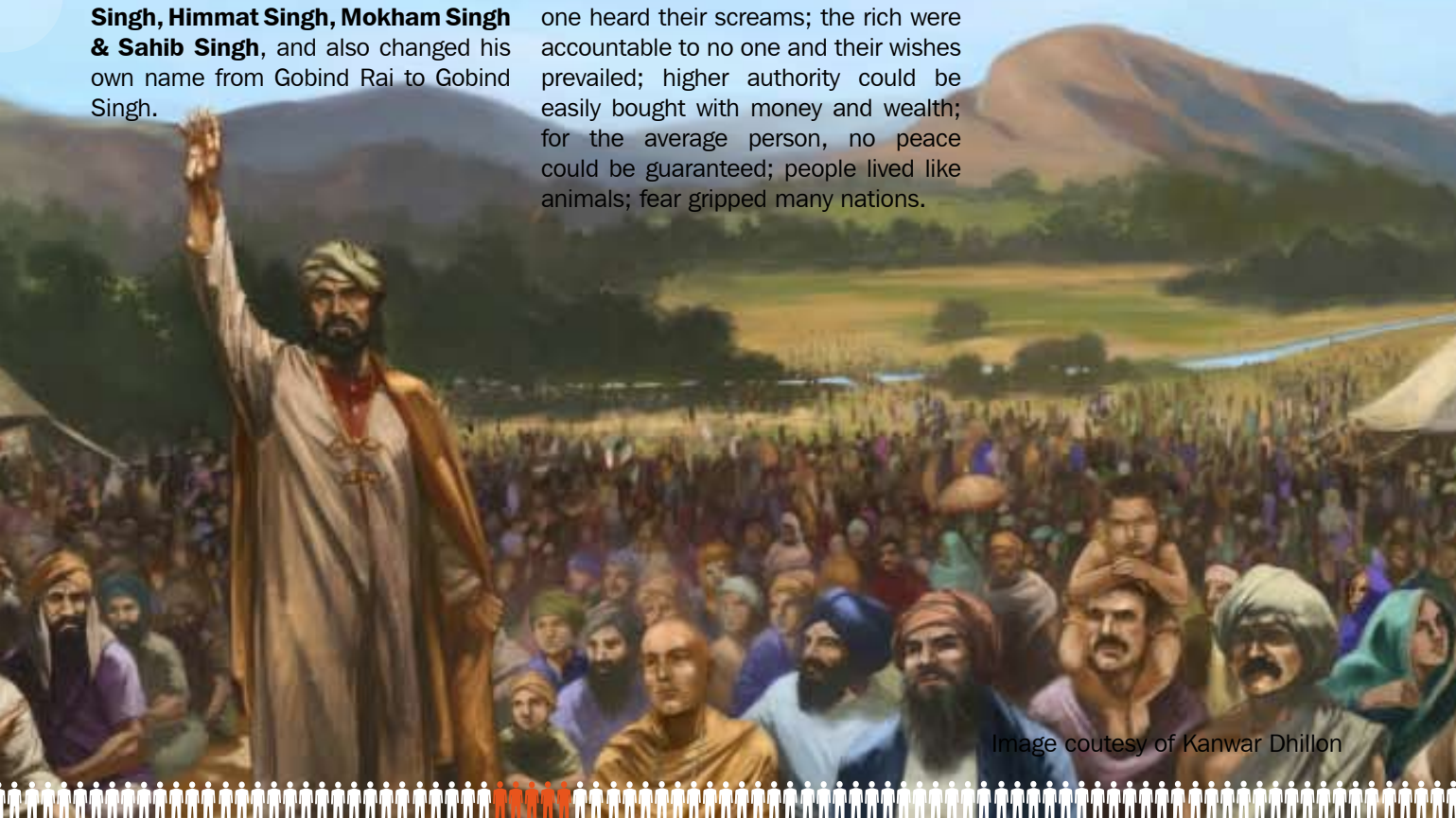


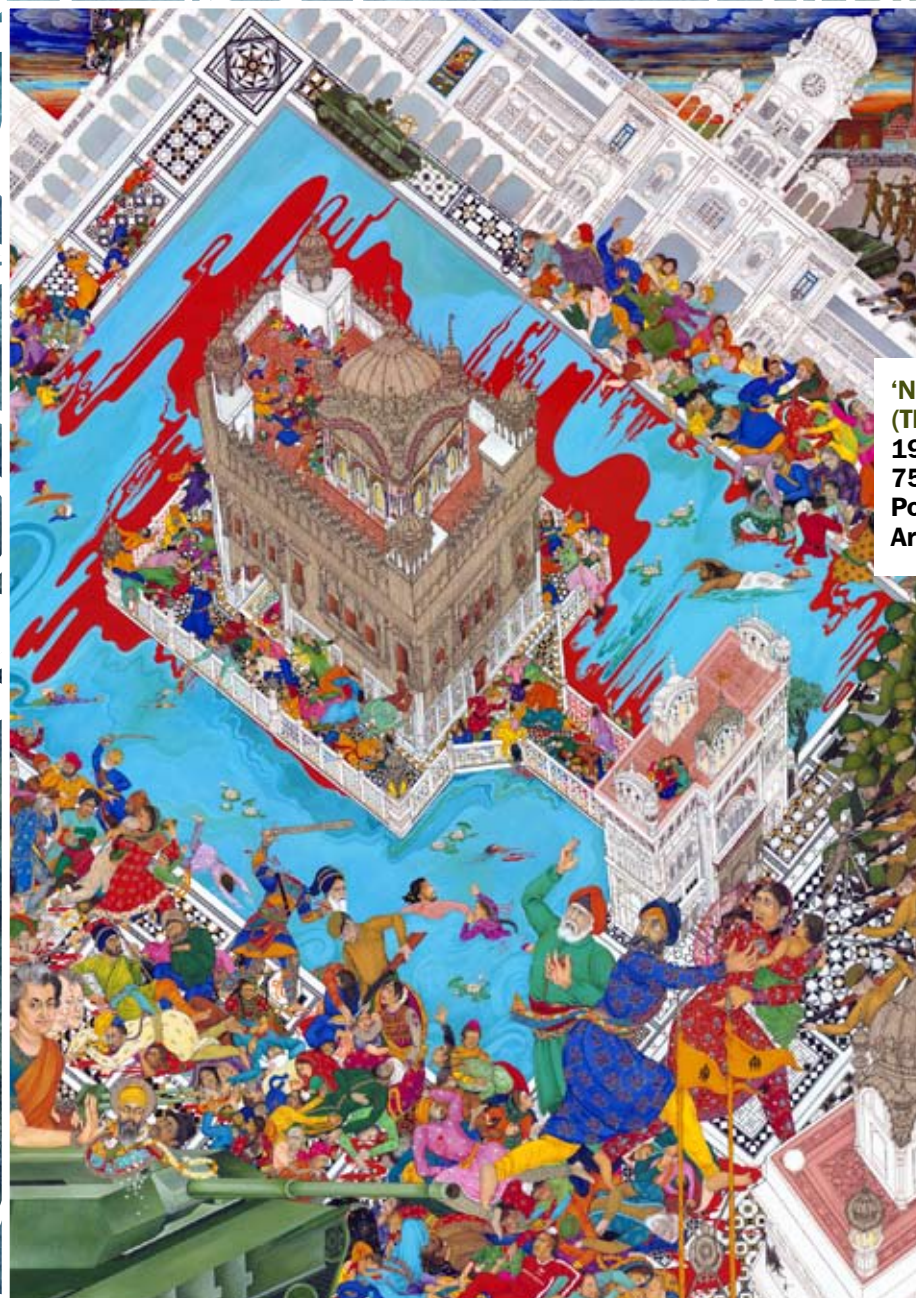
Image courtesy of Kanwar Dhillon

The different perspectives

displayed by the composition seek to convey the “mixed feelings” experienced by the artist, along with many fellow British Sikhs, when news of the attack first appeared in the media. The distant, bird’s eye view of the Golden Temple itself symbolises the geographic and physical separation of the Diaspora Sikh community from what was happening in India, and their consequent feeling of detachment which was heightened by “the notable lack of media coverage at the time”. In contrast, the ground level close-up view of details in the foreground focuses on the atrocities carried out by the Indian army, emphasising the Diaspora’s emotional attachment and closeness to what was happening, despite being physically removed from the situation.

The painting was initially inspired by the artist’s anger at the “inadequate and biased media coverage which contradicted the personal, eye witness accounts, that were filtering through from the Sikh community in India at the time and, later, the various Amnesty International and Human Rights Movement reports”. In her “liberating” of the Golden Temple from alleged Sikh terrorists, who had based themselves in the grounds of the complex, the media generally portrayed Prime Minister Indira Gandhi as the moral victor.

However, the painting shows that “the main casualties of the attack were in fact the thousands of pilgrims who had come to pay homage on one of the most important religious days in the Sikh calendar”.



‘Nineteen Eighty Four (The Storm)’
1998
75.5 x 101.5 cm
Poster color
Artist: Amrita Singh

The bias of the media and “the damaging effects it has had on the image of the

Sikhs” is symbolised by the group of blindfolded reporters who stand as ‘partners in crime’, shoulder to shoulder, with Indian troops (top left). There is a sense of horror and panic as pilgrims scramble over one another to find refuge from the bullets and armoured tanks. The diagonals created within the composition by the steep line-up of soldiers (right) and the specific orientation of the square temple complex, lends to the visual disturbance and chaos of the scene. The surrounding borders of the painting hem in the fleeing crowds, enhancing the feeling of claustrophobia and revealing the futility of their attempts to escape.

The symbolic representation of the 17th century Sikh warrior and martyr, Baba Deep Singh, (seen here supporting his severed head in his hand) whose defence of the Golden Temple against Muslim invaders became legendary, “reflects the common belief among Sikhs that the attack of 1984 paralleled the worst atrocities perpetrated against them in past history”. Indira Gandhi’s inclusion within the painting, even though she was not actually present during the attack, clearly puts the blame of bloodshed ultimately on her shoulders.

'Nineteen Eighty-Four' depicts the storming of the Golden Temple, the Sikh community's most holiest and historic shrine, by Indian troops in 1984. It reflects the personal sense of suffering and injustice felt by Sikhs world-wide, during the attack and in the aftermath of violence which resulted in the injury and death of thousands of innocent men, women, and children in Punjab.

ART OF WAR

BY THE SINGH TWINS

**'Nineteen Eighty-Four'
The Storming Of 'The Golden Temple'**

**70 x 50 cm (29.75 x 39.75in)
Gouache, gold dust on mountboard
by The Singh Twins and Rabindra K.D.Kaur Singh**

Her political motives for the attack are called into question through those features which demonstrate the faultless past record of Sikh loyalty to India in her early battles against repeated foreign invasions and persecution, and throughout the fight for Indian Independence. These include the Jallianwalla Bagh Monument which honours those Sikhs who lost their lives in the Amritsar Massacre of 1919, (a decisive turning point in India's struggle for Independence), the severed head of Independence freedom fighter Bhagat Singh Shaheed and that of Guru Tegh Bahadur Ji (the ninth Sikh leader whose martyrdom for the sake of the Hindu faith earned him the title of 'Hind Ki Chaddur' - or 'Protector of India').

Having been offered to India on a sacrificial plate, both heads are shown being frivolously tossed aside by Mrs Gandhi. These symbols provide a context to the "total incomprehension, deep sense of betrayal and hurt which Mrs Gandhi's actions evoked within the Sikh community".

Essentially, the attack of 1984 was regarded by many as an ill judged move by Mrs Gandhi in her wrangle for popularity in the polls. In this respect, this painting takes on board a more universal message where Mrs Gandhi is depicted as a "multi headed demon" composed of various 20th century politicians (including Clinton, Thatcher and Churchill) -who collectively "represent the kind of political abuse which manipulates the 'dispensable' masses in an obsessive thirst for personal power.

[Text and images: Copyright - The Singh Twins
www.singhtwins.co.uk]



"During a 2004 interview with Mark Tully for a BBC Radio 4 programme about Sikhs' responses to 1984, twenty years on, we were asked why we, as U.K. artists, still felt it was important to promote greater awareness about what happened in 1984, whilst Sikhs in India just wanted to forget the whole terrible saga and move on.

Our reply was that to ask us to forget 1984 would be equivalent to asking the Jews to forget the Jewish Holocaust...

Many younger generation Sikhs are completely ignorant about what happened in 1984. We believe that it is a knowledge of one's history, however painful, that makes us who we are.


It develops our sense of identity, purpose and pride in a collective heritage and provides us with lessons and role models for the future. In this respect, it is important to remember 1984, just as we do the historical periods of Sikh persecution every time we recite the Ardaas - no less for the fact that in them lies a message of hope and encouragement for our Sikh youth:



That against all odds, the Sikh community has been resilient enough to survive the greatest hardships and find the courage to preserve and protect its values, beliefs and identity"...

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Football Tournament A Monumental Success

Saturday 1st November 2008. The day started early, 6.00am to be precise. The volunteers from Sikh Activity Group rose to prepare for the biggest indoor Sikh football tournament that this country has seen. Over seventy teams from all over the country gathered at Aldersley Stadium in Wolverhampton to showcase the very best football skills the Sikh community has to offer.

The tournament had been organised to commemorate the tercentenary of the inauguration of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji as the everlasting Guru of the Sikhs. Accordingly after a brief registration, obligatory team photos and the all important pre-match meal of samosas washed down with hot sweet tea, the tournament began with a well received talk detailing how in 1708, in the town of Nanded, Maharashtra (India) Guru Gobind Singh Ji, the tenth master of the Sikhs, passed on the guruship to the Shabad (Word) in the Sikh scriptures, Aadh Guru Granth Sahib Ji, and then ascended to Sach Khand (heaven).

Thereafter the unscripted drama that is football unfolded. The games were all played with the intensity accustomed to football matches on the big screen. Children in the under 12's category displayed passion, vigour and emotion as they contested highly skilled games.

The event was well supported by a multitude of sponsors throughout the local business community. Wolverhampton Football Club, one of the major partners, sent scouts to identify gifted and talented players. Concerted fund-raising efforts by Sikh Activity Group including the production and distribution of the inaugural SEEQ magazine to over 40,000 people, meant that significant funds have been raised for Promise Dreams and Wolves Aid. Volunteers from Promise Dreams, a Wolverhampton based charity dedicated to fulfilling the dreams of seriously ill and terminally ill children and their families, were on hand to sell raffle tickets and to lend their support for the event. As too were representatives from a host of voluntary Sikh organizations from across the West Midlands. Commendation must be given to all the staff at Aldersley Stadium who gave their full backing to the event.

After much sweat and sinew, coupled with generous helpings of chapattis, curries and rice pudding provided by the endeavours of the hard working volunteers at Nanaksar Sikh temple (Pleck), WIP ran out as winners in the under 12's competition with Handsworth Boys Grammar showing sublime skill and end product in taking the accolade for the under 16's title.

Open Age 2 time Winners!



Under 16 Winners



£1000 to Wolves Community Trust

Calm before the storm



A memora-ble day was had by the hundreds that took part and watched. All that is left is to ask is when and where will the next one be held?

By Mangal Singh

Visit www.see-q.net for m

Delivering D:

This was replicated in the under 16's and the open age competition where even though there was a lot at stake – the trophies on offer would look magnificent on even the most mundane of fireplaces – the spirit of the games was never in doubt. The competitors living up to the Sikh ideals of fairness in battle and humility in victory.

The open age section was a hotly contested affair that saw an exceptional final between Akaal FC and ABD Football Club (Slough), with ABD Football Club edging out as 3-1 winners. An exhausting day ended with the announcement of raffle prize winners, and an awards ceremony for runners up, winners and man-of-the-tournament in all three categories.

Following the very successful five-a-side football tournament set up by the Sikh Activity group **SEEQ**, on 1st November 2008 a massive £4131.04 was raised for local children's charity Promise Dreams. The tournament brought local communities together to celebrate peace, equality, unity and forgiveness amongst other qualities we share in our community.



Presentation at Wolves FC!

Promise Dreams was created in 2001 and made a promise themselves to raise money for seriously and terminally ill children. They have helped provide treatment, help and support for the children and their families. So far they have delivered dream holidays, toys and medical treatment that can help save their lives or just help improve the quality of their lives. They have even helped children meet their favourite celebrities. Whatever the request Promise Dreams make a promise to deliver a dream.

Of course Promise Dreams would not be able to do this on their own and thanks to events like the five a side football tournament they are able to keep their promise. It's organisations like **SEEQ** that make this possible. The money raised through the tournament has already been put to good use and already begun to make dreams come true.

The money has helped Daniel, a 17 year old boy who is living with inoperable Ewings Sarcoma. This is an extreme form of bone cancer and has restricted Daniel from living like other teenagers. Unfortunately Daniel's treatment has not been successful and it is unknown how long he has left to live. This is why Promise Dreams make all the difference and answered Daniel and his families prayers when all they ask for is to enjoy and experience as many different things as possible each and every day that they share together.

Thanks to the money raised in November it has meant Alice will once again be able to take part in the family bike rides again. She will now be able to safely experience the wind blowing in her hair and laugh and play with her family again. The money has brought Alice a Duet Tandem wheelchair, which means she can now enjoy the great outdoors with her family.

These are just 2 examples of how we can help give children a reason to keep on fighting their illnesses and offer them a little bit of happiness to help pull them through tough times. You can see the difference to these children's lives already, but why stop now?



It's thanks to people with such big hearts that dreams can come true. "Everyone at Promise Dreams would like to send a huge THANK YOU to everyone involved with SEEQ, all your supporters and footballers involved with the fabulous tournament at Aldersley".

Thanks to the generous community in which we live in, Daniel and his family will be able to spend quality time together, away from the hospital environment. They will now be able to share a family weekend away and through the efforts of everybody involved in the tournament and the supporting community this has now become a reality for Daniel, not just a dream!

Daniel is not alone; he is just one of many children suffering with a life threatening illness, as is Alice, a 7 year old girl who is currently living with a condition called San Fillipo's disease. This is a chromosome abnormality that means Alice is unable to break down sugars effectively. This consequently means the sugar stores up within her body and causes damage to the skeleton and major organs. She can no longer do the things she once did as a toddler. Alice is fully aware her body has deteriorated and longs for the day she can ride a bike again. This is something so many of us take for granted, yet for Alice it would be a dream come true.



Stevie Ball with Under 12 Winners!



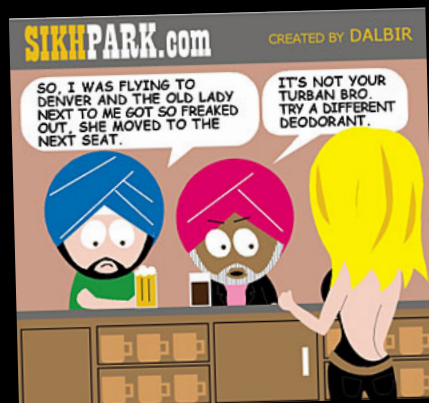
He Shoots! He Scores!

reams!
SEEQ



Bling Bling!

More pictures and details of upcoming tournaments!



from sikhchic.com

BACK SHOS BACK

Dear Baksho, how much money should I put in the golakh?

Guru Ji states that Sikhs should contribute ten per cent of their income to charitable causes and this would include gurdwaras. The expenses of a gurdwara are very high and include heating, lighting, food for langar etc. Ask yourself, will your contribution cover the cost of the langar you are about to receive?

Dear Baksho, I was once told I couldn't wash my hair on Tuesdays and Thursdays as something bad would happen. So I never wash my hair on these days. What would happen if I did?

You wont get any presents from Santa if you do...! On a serious note, this is just an old wives tale. Similar to walking under ladders, black cats crossing your path, opening umbrellas indoors etc. As Sikhs, we should not take any note of superstitions.

High and low, social class and status - the world wanders lost in superstition. (SGGS Ang 1243)

Dear Baksho, I recently came into Sikhi and I'm finding it hard to keep up with other gursikhs.

As you have recently come into Sikhi you can't be expected to be at the same level as others. Take things a step at a time and build your Sikhi slowly. Remember it's a marathon not a sprint!

Dear Baksho, last week I went to the gurdwara and had langar. Unfortunately the thaal was full to the top and I couldn't eat it all, so I left it, and the auntie by the sink gave me a dirty look. I now feel guilty. What should I have done?

Guru ka langar has been blessed by Guru Ji and therefore should never be thrown away. When the langar is ready, a small portion of each of the dishes is placed in a plate or bowl and placed in front of the Sri Guru Granth Sahib and a prayer called the Ardas is performed. The Ardas is a petition to God, a prayer to thank the Creator for all His gifts and blessings. A steel Kirpan is passed through each item of food. After the Ardas is completed, each item of food is returned back to its original pot or container. This is done in a belief that the blessings of the "holy" food are thus passed to the entire Sangat through the langar. Only ask for as much as you can eat and don't forget those around the world less fortunate than us when throwing food away.

Dear Baksho, when I go to the Gurdwara and cover up my head, it messes up my hair-do. Why do I have to cover my head?

A Sikhs head should be covered at all times and not only in Gurdwara. We cover our heads as a sign of respect and humility. This practice is also common in other religions such as in Islam and Judaism where you will see the people of these religions also cover their heads when going to pray.

Email your questions to **baksho@see-q.net**

Yo Baksho, what's happenin? Got some beef, mi old Bibi givin me grief. Woke up in the morning and said 'Yo! Respec, Gran!' Before I know it I'm getting a backhand off the old man. What's the shizzle with the nizzle?

I've asked your Uncle Mangy to translate. We think you're asking why you got a slap off your 'Old Man'. I think your 'Old Man' knows what's best for you young man. Im sure your Bibi and Dad would prefer you to greet them with 'Waheguru Ji Ka Khalsa, Waheguru Ji Ke Fateh (WJKK WJKF)' thus showing respect to your elders. In the normal situation when two Sikhs meet, with folded hands on either side in mutual courtesy and respect they exchange greetings of WJKK WJKF pointing out the glory of God to each other. In literal Words WJKK WJKF means the Khalsa belongs to God, Victory belongs to God. WJKK WJKF has been used since the creation of the Khalsa.

Dear Baksho, I went to a Baba recently and the Baba gave me naam and I'm not allowed to tell you what it is. Is this allowed in Sikhi.

Let me guess, is it Rumpelstiltskin? Just kidding, but the answer to your question is that our Guru gave us naam, the shabad Waheguru, there is no secret about this and is the true naam. You should be careful about following these dodgy geeza's. >

In Sikhi our Guru is the Eternal Guru, Guru Granth Sahib ji. Remember the ardas says "Sab sikhon ko hukam hai, Guru manyo Granth" Commandment to all the sikhs: Accept Granth as the Guru.

Yes Baksho, whats going on. I'm a young proud sikh boy and when it comes to vaisakhi I like to wear orange clothes, highlight my hair, wear as many garms with a khanda on, decorate my car with chandeh (Sikh flag), and drive up and down Soho Road to let everyone know its Vaisakhi. I think I'm representing for us all, but why is it these "militants" always hand me flyers saying I am doing wrong and give me lectures, what's their problem?

Well young man, these Singhs who are giving you advice might just have a point. Im sure in your eyes you may be 'representing', however every year around Vaisakhi time im sure you are aware that the Nishaan Sahib is a prominent feature, however, whilst some hoist it high in honour and see it as a sign of their faith others disrespect its value by drinking & smoking in its presence and regard it as a fashion accessory. See the article, Flying High, on page 7 for a more in depth explanation.

Dear Baksho, I'm not allowed take my Kara and my Sulai into gigs, what am I meant to do if I get in to a fight, I was wondering if we could get some sort of petition together?

Personally, I don't do gigs but if you are going to go then you should not see your Kara or Sulai as weapons. The Kara represents the eternity of God and is not a weapon, and your Sulai is to help tuck your hair into your pagg or patka and is not a weapon either. You could stop going to gigs if you always end up in trouble or you could learn a martial art as a form of self defence. There are classes at various Gurdwara as on the "Whats Going On" guide on the back of this magazine. You should try and control your anger and not resort to using weapons. Any Gursikh will tell you that even the Kirpan they carry is only used when all peaceful means have been exhausted. Also, your uncle Mangy carries a spoon with him and uses it as a sulai, this maybe easier to carry into a gig and is less likely to harm anyone and can also be used to eat your desserts while out.





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Name: Pops & Raj
Age: 29 & 30
Location: Glasgow

Inspirational figures?

Guru Gobind Singh Ji, Sant Bhindranwale, Sant Domeli Wale, Maharaja Ranjit Singh, Hari Singh Nalwa. Musically: Nusrat Fateh Ali Khan, A R Rahman, Gurdas Maan, Bob Marley, Kuldeep Manak, Dr Dre, Shy FX, The Prodigy.

Q&A:

Role of religion in your daily life?

Guidance, direction, inspiration and energy.

Advice/message to aspiring artists like yourselves?

Believe in Art for the sake of Art.

Most embarrassing moment?

When Raj's turban fell off while he was on the dodgems at the carnival as a kid.

Thoughts on SeeQ Magazine?

I've only seen one copy so far and thought it looked pretty fly!!

Football or Cricket? (Or Kabaddi)

None.....not really into any of them.

Favourite Joke?

What do you call a fast punjabi woman?.....TejKaur (its lame, but funny!)

What do feel are the key issues facing the Sikh youth today?

Loss of identity, lack of parchar that youth can relate to, realising and living in the reality of Sikhi, collectively organising themselves as the next generation of the panth.

Can you describe a situation or time in your life where your religion helped you in a positive sense?

In the work that we do our religion helps us stay grounded and also gives us a focus and direction to take. Our music is becoming more and more conscious and a lot richer due to being influenced by our religion. This to us is very positive as we're more excited by our work, and challenged to come up with new concepts and ideas which draw us apart from the other musicians within the music scene.

tigerstyle





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L.L.B (Hons.)



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VAISAKHI 2009

SRI GURU GRANTH SAHIB JI - THE LIVING GURU

'The Word is the Guru and Guru Is The Word' Sri Guru Ram Das Sahib Ji

Vaisakhi is probably the most important event of the year for Sikhs. It marks the occurrence in 1699 when Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji created the order of the Khalsa and the Punj Pyare, establishing a discipline and a code of conduct for Sikhs, which made them persons of honour and dignity. Traditionally Vaisakhi had been a time when farmers harvested the fruits of their labour and so festivities & rejoicing took place everywhere. Vaisakhi, in spiritual terms therefore, is the reaping of ones spiritual journey and an occasion to reflect where we have come from, and by Gurbarsad where we have reached in our journey of self-realisation.

At Vaisakhi '09 we have continued our focus on the 300th anniversary of the unique legacy of the Word of God being installed as the immortal Guru for Sikhs, in the form of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji, by Sri Guru Gobind Singh Ji .

Max Arthur Macauliffe, a British historian, writes:

'The Sikh religion differs as regards the authenticity of its dogmas from other great theological systems. Many of the great teachers the world has known have not a line of their composition, and we only know what they taught through tradition or second hand information. . . . But the compositions of the Sikh Gurus are preserved. . . . It would be difficult to point to a religion of greater originality or to a more comprehensive ethical system.'

As we also mark the 25th anniversary of Operation Blue Star and the anti-Sikh pogroms afflicted across India and remember the injustices meted out to the Sikh community, we are reminded of how Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji unequivocally confronts the wrenching of society through bigotry and injustice. Even during the era when Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was revealed to the world, South Asia was enduring a Mughal regime suppressing freedom of religion, and a Brahmanic system which denied equality and progress due caste or class at birth. In comparison the essence of Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is a message guiding the individual on an equitable journey to remerge the soul-bride with the Lord Master- God free from barriers of discrimination.

Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji absorbs writings of Sikh Gurus and Bhagats (saints) from all main religions, imbued solely with the love for God. For example Bhagat Bhikka was a learned scholar of Islam, Bhagat Fareed Ji a Sufi Muslim saint, and Bhagat Surdas a Hindu mystic and poet. Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji is the essence of not simply tolerance but mutual respect and regard for sincere followers of different paths to God. The classless and egalitarian message contained in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji was so revolutionary in the midst of the early 16th century, that Sri Guru Arjan Dev Sahib Ji was martyred whilst upholding its testimony.

The Council of Sikh Gurdwaras in Birmingham organises two Nagar Kirtans (holy street processions) and a community celebration in Handsworth Park, Birmingham. Everyone is invited to this great event to join us in our celebration of the spiritual harvest of Vaisakhi and we want to share the unique cohesive message of Gurbani with all communities. The celebrations promise to be a family geared event which principally promotes social cohesion and service. In Guru Ka Darbar we can partake of a spiritual feast of kirtan (hymns sung to ragas) and traditional ballads in the form of Dhad, sarangi and katha to help us cleanse our souls with the nectar of the Word. Do take a dip.

During the day there will also be an opportunity to not just watch but also participate in an exciting array of sports activities put together with the help of Hamstead Hall Community & Sports Association and Khalsa Football Federation. A number of young people's organisations have been working hard to bring together an ambitious programme especially for young people as well as Sikh heritage and history exhibitions. We thank Akaal Organisation, Guru Nanak Community Centre West Bromwich and SK for their efforts, as well as BOSS and Raaj Radio.

The bazaar stalls, offering a delight of vegetarian food, custom and specialist arts and crafts are always popular and you will be able to pick up information from public and service agencies all geared to helping people get better access to their facilities from the information and display. We hope your visit to Handsworth Park is beneficial. Even if you are unable to attend, we most of all pray that you have an inspiring and uplifting Vaisakhi.

Council of Sikh Gurdwaras in Birmingham

THE COUNCIL OF SIKH GURDWARAS IN BIRMINGHAM

Birmingham & Sandwell Sangat & Panthic Organisations

Invite All The Communities To The

Vaisakhi Open Air Celebrations

Vaisakhi Vaisakh is the second month in the Sikh calendar and has long been associated with the harvest festival in Punjab. In the month of Vaisakh, communities in the north of the Indian sub-continent reap the benefits of year long toil in the fields. The weather is mild, the work is over, crops have been harvested and sold and everyone has money in their pockets.

Birth of Khalsa For Sikhs, the month of Vaisakh also symbolises a different type of harvest. The first day of the month, Vaisakhi is the anniversary of the birth of the Khalsa Nation. On 13th April 1699 the tenth Guru, Guru Gobind Singh Ji called a mass gathering of Sikhs and initiated the five beloved ones (Panj Pyare) and established the Khalsa order of Saint Soldiers, bringing to fruition a way of life that had been lived by the 10 Gurus and which would be guided by the immortal message conveyed through them and installed as The Word in Sri Guru Granth Sahib Ji.

The Brummie Vaisakhi The Council of Sikh Gurdwaras in Birmingham marks this religious and festive period every year, holding the largest Vaisakhi Open Air Celebration outside India, attracting over 65,000 people. People from all faiths join in to celebrate the gift of life and peaceful co-existence. Everyone is welcome to attend this free event which will include Sikh cultural & religious activities, arts and crafts exhibitions, sports arena and live entertainment.

Bringing Communities Together Dr Payara Singh Bhogal, Chairman of the Council of Sikh Gurdwaras Birmingham said "If you want to see diversity at work: come to the Vaisakhi '09, largest Asian community event in Europe. All the diverse communities in Birmingham join in to celebrate the Sikh festival of Vaisakhi thus promoting social cohesion, awareness and respect of other faiths as enshrined in Sikh ethos."

Khalsa Uniform To this day Sikhs around the globe remember the month of Vaisakh and continue to be recognised for the distinctive attire of the 5 Kakkars or 5K's they adorn. A discipline and uniform for all members of the Sikh faith regardless of gender, background or status, it provides an ever contemporary message to society both current and for the future, that we are all equal in the eyes of God and it is our actions that will be observed not our standing, social class or physical make up.



DRESS CODE: ORANGE & BLUE



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Information & Display Stalls



Sports Arena



Tri Golf



Armed Forces



Ice Cream



Sikh Exhibitions



Cricket Activities



Stewards Unit



Bazaar



Vaisakhi 09

PROUD TO BE SIKH
PROUD TO BE BRITISH

BE A PART OF IT
BE PROUD OF IT

Handsworth Park Event Layout

Birmingham Nagar Kirtan

9 am Ramgarhia Sikh Temple
10:30 am Great Hampton Street



11am
GNNSJ
Soho Road

End of Parade in park
Guru Ravidass Gurdwara
11.45 am

Entrance For
Nagar Kirtans

Grove Lane

Holly Road



26th April
2009
SUNDAY

Sandwell Nagar Kirtan

9 am Guru Nanak Gurdwara Smethwick
11:10 am Gurdwara Shaheed Baba Deep Singh Ji

Handsworth
Park
1 pm



Gurdwara
Singh Sabha
12:20 pm

Gurdwara
Bebe Nanaki
11:40 am

www.vaisakhibirmingham.org.uk

EXHIBITIONS | YOUTH AREA | BAZAAR STALLS



Bouncing Castle



Chips Langar



Lost Children's Area



First Aid Area



Langar



Event Control



Entrance/Exit



Guru Da Darbar



Youth Area



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Neighbourhood Policing

if it matters to our communities... it matters to us

For information about your local neighbourhood team please visit www.west-midlands.police.uk or call 0845 113 5000

What is Neighbourhood Policing?

Neighbourhood Policing is provided by teams of police officers and Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), often together with Special Constables, local authority wardens, volunteers and partners.

It aims to provide people who live or work in a neighbourhood with:

- **Access - to local policing services through a named point of contact**
- **Influence - over policing priorities in their neighbourhood**
- **Interventions - joint action with partners & the public**
- **Answers - sustainable solutions & feedback on what is being done**

There are Neighbourhood Policing teams working within every neighbourhood in the West Midlands, to contact yours call 0845 113 5000 and ask for your local police station who will be able to put you in touch.



How does neighbourhood policing differ from normal policing?

Neighbourhood policing allows the communities, the police and public sector partners to work together to resolve local issues. It also allows local communities to set the priorities for their neighbourhood policing team. The team will tell them what they have done to resolve those local issues.



Neighbourhood Policing will provide communities with named points of contact within their neighbourhoods. These officers will be led by a police sergeant, and include Constables and Police Community Support Officers (PCSO).

What is a Police Community Support Officer (PCSO)?

Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs), also called Community Support Officers (CSOs), provide a visible presence in the community. They deal with Anti-Social Behaviour, low-level crime and incidents, local problems/ priorities and quality of life issues. They support and improve service to victims and vulnerable people and conduct engagement and problem solving activity.

PCSOs help reduce crime and anti-social behaviour by dealing with minor offences and supporting front-line policing.

PCSOs patrol in uniform. Here are some of the issues they may deal with in their work:

- **Working with the public to identify and address their concerns**
- **Contributing to the management of local neighbourhoods**
- **Helping to support people who are affected by crime and disorder**

Who are my local neighbourhood team and how can I contact them?

our local neighbourhood team will be based from your local police station.

Every police station has their own website, which contains all the information you need to know about your local neighbourhood team including who your local team are and how you can contact them.

You can access your local stations website via www.west-midlands.police.uk or alternatively call the help line on 0845 113 5000 and ask to speak to your local police station.



Punjabi Classes

Gurdwara Amrit Parchar (Oldbury)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Willenhall)
Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara (W'ton)
Nanaksar Gurdwara (Walsall)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Wednesfield)

Gurbani Santhia

Gurdwara Amrit Parchar (Oldbury)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Willenhall)
Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara (W'ton)
Nanaksar Thath Gurdwara (W'ton)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Smethwick)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Smethwick)

Kirtan Santhia

Nanaksar Gurdwara (Walsall)
Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara (W'ton)

Kirtan Naam Simran

Singh Sabha Gurdwara (Coventry)
Guru Nanak Parkash Gurdwara (Coventry)
Ramgarhia Gurdwara (Coventry)
Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara (Leicester)
Gurdwara Amrit Parchar (Oldbury)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Smethwick)
Nanaksar Gurdwara (Walsall)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Willenhall)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Wednesfield)
Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara (W'ton)

Martial Arts Gatka

Guru Nanak Parkash Gurdwara (Coventry)
Gurdwara Amrit Parchar (Oldbury)
Nanaksar Gurdwara (Walsall)
Guru Tegh Bahadur Gurdwara (Leicester)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Telford)
Guru Nanak Sikh Gurdwara (W'ton)

Shin Kin

Bebe Nanaki Gurdwara (B'ham)
Ramgharia Gurdwara (B'ham)
Dasmesh Gurdwara (Leicester)
Singh Sabha Gurdwara (Nottingham)
Nanaksar Thath Gurdwara (W'ton)
Sikh School Of Arts (Kings Heath)
Singh Sabha Gurdwara (Coventry)
Guru Panth Parkash Gurdwara (Leicester)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Telford)

Eagle Claw Kung Fu

Guru Nanak Community Centre (West Brom)
Guru Nanak Community Centre (West Brom)

Thai Boxing

Gurdwara Amrit Parchar (Oldbury)

Ju Jitsu

Nanaksar Gurdwara (Walsall)
Saturday 10.00 - 12.00

Chaupai Sahib Programs

Nanaksar (Pleck, Walsall)
Ramgarhia Sikh Temple (Coventry)
Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Sparkhill)
Khalsa House (West Brom)

Gym

Gurdwara Amrit Parchar (Oldbury)
Tues, Wed, Thurs & Sun 19:00 - 21:00

Annual Gurmat Camp

Nanaksar Gurdwara (Walsall)
July - August 8 - 15 yrs

Amrit Sanchar

Guru Nanak Gurdwara (Smethwick)
Gurdwara Amrit Parchar (Oldbury)
Every Sat after Sangraand

Sat: 12.00 - 13.00 Sun: 11.00 - 13.00
Sun: 10.30 - 13.00
Sat: 9.00 - 14.30 Sun: 9.00 - 14.30
Sun: 10.00 - 12.00
Sun: 10.30 - 12.00 Wed: 18.00 - 19.30

Sun: : 18:30 - 20:00
Mon & Tues: 17:00 - 19:00
Wed & Thurs: 18:00 - 20:30
Wed: 18:00 - 21:00
Wed: 18:00 - 19:00 (beginners)
Wed: 19:00 - 20:00 (advanced)

Sun: 16:00 - 18:00
Mon & Tues: 17:00 - 19:00

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Sat: 09:00 - 11:00
Fri: 19:00 - 21:00
Wed: 18:00 - 20:00
Mon: 19:30 - 20:30
Tues: 12:00 - 14:30
Sun: 18:00 - 20:00
Sun: 18:00 - 20:00
Wed: 11:00 - 15:00

Tues: 18:30 - 20:30
Sat: 12:00 - 14:00
Mon: 17:30 - 19:30
Sat: 19:00 - 21:00
Sat: 12:00 - 14:00
Fri: 18:00 - 20:00

Fri: 17:15 - 18:15
Wed: 18:00 - 19:00
Thurs: 18:00 - 19:00
Wed: 17:00 - 18:00
Thurs: 17:00 - 18:00 / Sat 10:00 - 11:00
Fri: 18:00 - 19:00
Thurs: 17:00 - 18:00
Sat: 11:00 - 12:00
Wed: 19:00 - 20:00

Wed: 18:00 - 20:00
Sun: 17:00 - 19:00 /
19:00 - 20:00 (Ladies Only)

Tues: 19:00 - 21:00

Sun: 17:00 - 18:00
Sun: 17:00 - 18.15
Mon: 06:00 - 18:00
Fri: 19:00 - 21:00

What's Going On?

Sir Guru Singh Sabha Gurdwara, 47 - 49 Cross Road, Coventry, CV6 5GR
Ramgharia Gurdwara, Foleshill Road, Coventry
Guru Nanak Parkash Gurdwara, Harnall Lane, Coventry

Bebe Nanaki Gurdwara, 89 Rockery Road, Handsworth, Birmingham, 0121 551 3489
Guru Nanak Gurdwara, 128 - 130 High Street, Smethwick, B66 3AP, 0121 555 5926
Ramgharia Gurdwara, Waverley Road, Small Heath, Birmingham

Sikh School of Arts, 341 Vicarage Road, next to Auto Power, Kings Heath, Birmingham
Gurdwara Amrit Parchar, 65 Birmingham Road, Oldbury, B69 4EH, 0121 552 3778
Khalsa House/Guru Nanak Community Centre, Edward Street, West Bromwich, Birmingham
Guru Teg Bahadur Gurdwara, East Park Road, Leicester, 01533 760517

Guru Panth Parkash Gurdwara, Ashford Lane off Welford Lane, Leicester, LE2 6AA

Dasmesh Gurdwara, Gypsy Lane, Leicester
Singh Sabha Gurdwara, Nottingham Road, Sherwood, Nottingham

Guru Nanak Gurdwara, 1 Hadley Road, Telford, TF1 6PW, 01952 251734

Nanaksar Gurdwara, Wellington Street, Pleck, Walsall, WS2 9QR, 01922 641040

Nanaksar Thath Gurdwara, Penn Road, Wolverhampton

Guru Nanak Gurdwara, 65 - 67 Walsall Road, Willenhall, WV13 2RD. 01902 605286

Guru Nanak Gurdwara, Well Lane, Wednesfield, Wolverhampton, WV11 1XT

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